

M E M O I R S

OF THE LATE

Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN:

WITH A

REVIEW of his PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

“ INFORMATION to those who would wish to
remove to AMERICA.”

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.

HOR.

L O N D O N :

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OF THE LATE

DR BENJAMIN FRANKLIN;

BY JOHN BARCLAY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: Printed by J. B. B. B. B.

IN THE YEAR 1791.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

THE biographer who attempts to write American lives, will find their characters very complex, and of difficult dissection. Doctor BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, the subject of the present memoirs, affords a striking instance of the propriety of this remark. In him we may discern both the sagacious philosopher, and the subtle politician:—well versed in the mazes of human life, he knew the best means of rendering the virtues and vices, the infirmities and follies of mankind subservient to his own purposes. Possessing naturally a deep and distinct perception, his judgment led him to soar above the prejudices of vulgar minds, and to look down, as from an eminence, on those who were confined by modes of education, systems of faith, or political institutions. Being self-taught, and free from

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the authority of great names, he boldly investigated every object of the creation, drew his deductions from the phænomena, and thought for himself. This produced an active, vigorous intellect; a mode of reasoning concise, clear, and convincing. This wonderful man, who surprized the schools, and became the admiration of the people, was born at Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, in the year 1705. His father was a tallow-chandler, and the son served an apprenticeship to a printer in that city. This occupation led him to the pursuit of knowledge; and in these younger years he manifested a love for science, and a particular attachment to subjects of a philosophical nature; of which his letters to Sir Hans Sloane are an evident testimony.

There have been different motives assigned for his leaving Boston, and going to Philadelphia; some have thought it was a love intrigue; but others say, that, having attacked the conduct of the General Court in some anonymous satyrical pieces, and being discovered, he was obliged to fly from his native country, to avoid the consequences. However, his removal was the means

means of introducing him to a wider sphere of action, and gradually placed him in a more respectable situation; though, at his first appearance in Pennsylvania, he was glad to get work as a journeyman printer; in which employ he exhibited a great example of frugality and industry. These virtues soon enabled him to commence business for himself. He began with printing Primers, Pfalters, and Spelling-books, for which there was a great demand in this infant country. At length he purchased, from its original proprietor, the Pennsylvania Gazette, the oldest paper in that province. It was in this paper, and an almanac, which he annually published, that the superiority of his genius first burst forth from its humble obscurity, and displayed talents which have since astonished the world.

Mr. Franklin was now the admired editor of the Pennsylvania Gazette, and met with the warm encouragement of his fellow-citizens. About this time he gained a valuable friend in the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield. This gentleman was then in the prime of life, possessed of all the charms and powers of oratory requisite to influence the passions,

and captivate the hearts of the multitude. He was preaching throughout North America with great applause and success, and had just composed a volume of sermons, and also collated from Dr. Watts and others a hymn-book for the use of his followers, who were become very numerous.

Mr. Whitefield gave the copy of these to Mr. Franklin, who published them, and they had a rapid and extensive sale, the profits of which enabled him to enlarge his business to considerable advantage.

In proceeding on these memoirs, I would chuse to view Mr. Franklin at first in the amiable part of his character, as a philosopher and benefactor to mankind: it will then be time enough to reverse the medal, and to contemplate the shades and obscurities of his conduct as a politician.

Being now firmly settled in the printing business, no man could pay to it greater attention; and his prudence in pecuniary affairs was such, that he soon acquired, what any tradesman might consider, *a competency*. All the leisure time he could spare from other avocations, was spent in the acquisition of knowledge, and in his favourite study

study of natural philosophy. Ever fond to be accounted a man of letters, he even applied himself to the acquirement of the Latin and French languages after he had arrived to manhood, and, by an unwearied perseverance, accomplished his purpose. It may be justly observed, that Pennsylvania has exceeded any other part of America in the number of its literary and charitable institutions; and several of them were first suggested and promoted by Mr. Franklin. He was the principal agent in the foundation of the first public school of any note in that province; and the Philadelphians are originally indebted to him for their library. In 1743 several gentlemen, in different parts of the colonies, formed themselves into a society for promoting useful knowledge in America: Mr. Franklin drew up the original plan or proposal, and it has been continued ever since, and is now known by the name of the *American Philosophical Society*, which has belonging to it, in Europe and elsewhere, many members of distinguished reputation.

The society greatly increasing in the number of its members, some years after, it was

was found necessary, for the more effectual advancement of their design, to distribute themselves into six committees, under the following heads, viz.

- I. Natural Philosophy, Mathematics, Optics, Astronomy, and Geography.
- II. Medicine, Chemistry and Anatomy.
- III. Natural History and Botany.
- IV. Trade and Commerce.
- V. Mechanics and Architecture.
- VI. Husbandry and American Improvements.

This distribution was communicated to the several colonies by the public prints; and the friendly correspondence, in the foregoing branches of knowledge, of all gentlemen of learning and ingenuity, was earnestly solicited. These means were crowned with success by an extensive correspondence, and the society became firmly and respectably established.

Mr. Franklin daily increased in reputation and science, and applied himself with uncommon assiduity to investigate the nature of electricity. In his experiments, it is said, he

he was assisted by the Rev. Ebenezer Kinnersley, professor of English and Oratory in the college and academy of Philadelphia, who was then reading weekly lectures on this curious and entertaining branch of natural philosophy, at the apparatus room in the college. He undoubtedly improved by the experience of this ingenious gentleman; but his own sagacious and active mind led him on to discoveries that will immortalize his name, and hand him down to the remotest ages.

The resemblance between the *Electric Spark* and *Lightning* is so obvious, that we find it among the earliest observations on the subject; but the proof of the important theorem of *their identity* was reserved for Mr. Franklin*; he first observed the power of uninsulated points in drawing off the electricity from bodies at great distances; and thence inferred, that a pointed metallic bar, if insulated at a considerable height in the air, would become electrical by communication from the clouds, during a thunder-storm. He gave this thought to the public;

* Nicholson's Philosophy.

and

and several machines, consisting of insulated iron bars, erected perpendicular to the horizon, and pointed at top, were set up in different parts of France and England. The first apparatus that was favoured with a visit from the ethereal matter, was that of Mons. Dalibard, at Marli la Ville, about six leagues from Paris; it consisted of a bar of the length of 40 feet, and was electrified on the 10th day of May, 1752, for the space of half an hour, during which time the longest sparks it emitted measured about two inches. Mr. Franklin, after having published the method of verifying his hypothesis concerning the sameness of electricity with the matter of lightning, was waiting for the erection of a spire in Philadelphia, to carry his views into execution; not imagining that a pointed rod, of a moderate height, could answer the purpose; when it occurred to him that, by means of a common kite, he could have a readier and better access to the regions of thunder than by any spire whatever. Preparing therefore a large silk handkerchief, and two cross sticks, of a proper length, on which to extend it, he took the opportunity of the first approaching thunder-storm
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to walk into a field, in which there was a shed convenient for his purpose ; but, dreading the ridicule which too commonly attends unsuccessful attempts in science, he communicated his intended experiment to nobody but his son, who assisted him in raising the kite. The kite being raised, the end of the string was tied to a silk string, which he held in his hand, and a small key fastened at the place of junction. A considerable time elapsed before there was any appearance of its being electrified. One very promising cloud had passed over it without effect, when at length, just as he was going to despair of his contrivance, he observed some loose threads of the hempen string to stand erect, and to avoid one another, just as if they had been suspended in a common conductor.— Struck with the promising appearance, he immediately presented his knuckle to the key ; and judge of the exquisite pleasure he felt at the moment the discovery was complete. He perceived a very evident electric spark ; others succeeded, even before the string was wet, so as to put the matter past all dispute ; and when the rain had wetted the string, he collected the electricity very

copiously. This happened in June, 1752, a month after electricians in France had verified the same theory; but before he had heard any thing they had done.

Having been thus fortunate with his kite, his success and pregnant invention prompted him to further contrivances. He insulated an iron rod, to draw the lightning into his house, for the purpose of making experiments, whenever there should be a considerable quantity of the electrical fluid in the atmosphere: and that he might not lose an opportunity of that nature, he connected *two bells* with his apparatus, which gave notice by ringing whenever the rod was electrified. But this discovery was not only surprising and curious in its nature, but also of great benefit to mankind, as it led Mr. Franklin to the construction of his metalline rods, which have been found highly useful in preventing buildings from being damaged by lightning, and consequently must have saved many lives that would otherwise have been destroyed by this destructive element. For several years, while he was deeply engaged in these electrical experiments, he maintained an epistolary correspondence with

with Peter Collifon, Esq. fellow of the Royal Society, to whom he communicated his various improvements and discoveries. These letters were published, and much admired both at home and abroad; and the English literati readily joined in giving every testimony of approbation to his merits and abilities.

In the month of April, 1762, the university of Oxford conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws; and being, as it were, in the zenith of his philosophical glory, many of the most eminent men of the age cultivated his friendship, and revered his name. In the letters on electricity afore-mentioned, there are many useful observations well worthy of notice, as they may, in some cases, tend to the preservation of life, one of which I cannot forbear laying before my readers. It being a very common practice in thunder-gusts, for persons in the country to take shelter under a tree, the passage alluded to will claim their attention.

“ As electrical clouds (says the Doctor) pass over the country, high hills, and high trees, lofty towers, spires, masts of ships,

chimnies, &c. as so many prominences draw the electric fire, and the whole cloud discharges there; dangerous it is to take shelter under a tree, during a thunder-gust: it hath been fatal to many, both men and beasts. It is safer to be in the open field for another reason: when the cloaths are wet, if a flash in its way to the ground should strike your head, it would run in the water over the surface of your body. Hence a wet rat cannot be killed by the exploding electrical bottle, when a dry rat may."

These facts have been verified in several instances; two of which I shall relate for the information of such persons as may not have been conversant in such speculations. The first happened some years since near Lancaster, in the province of Pennsylvania, and is as follows:

"Three boys of that town, born within a few months of each other, and all in the thirteenth year of their age, went out on the 24th July, in the morning, to gather huckleberries. On their return about four o'clock in the evening, it rained pretty hard, which induced them, though already wet, to take shelter under a large black oak that grew in
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the middle of the great road, distant about forty yards from any other tree. *One of the boys sat close with his left side to the tree, and his head reclining upon the trunk.* The two others sat at some distance from the trunk, under a large spreading bough. Several claps of thunder broke from the westward; the explosions became sharper and more frequent; a flash of lightning at last struck the tree, killed the boy who sat next to it, together with a dog that had crept between his knees, and struck down the other two, so that they were insensible of their condition, and unable to move for several minutes. However, one of the two was at length able to get up; but found himself stunned, faint, weak and staggering like a drunken person. As soon as he came to reflect upon the cause of his distress, he turned round to examine the fate of his companions, and perceiving that the next one to him had some symptoms of life, attempted to raise him up; but not being able to effect this, he went to the other, whom he found in the same situation in which he had seen him alive, except that the stroke which he had received in the head had forced him into a more recumbent

bent posture, His eyes were open, and in a staring position, and every limb and joint were stiffened. The boy, scarce recovered from the fright occasioned by his own misfortune, and now greatly terrified with the sight before him, took to his heels, and ran till he came to the house of a Mr. John Stoner, distant about a quarter of a mile, where he told the melancholy tale. Several people repaired immediately to the place; they found the second boy, who remained alive, lying upon his back, at the distance of about 100 yards from the tree, where it is supposed he had fell, or rather crept, in attempting to get home. The other they found in the situation already described, with two large rents in his hat, where the lightning entered, and the hair upon the left side of his head, where he reclined against the tree, greatly singed; his left shoulder very livid, and several black spots upon his body. The day after, he was buried.

“ The others were confined to their beds, in a dangerous and dreadful situation. In company with others I paid them a visit.— They are both sensible boys for their age, and were able to give satisfactory answers to all

all the questions that were proposed. Upon being asked whether they heard any noise, at the time they felt the stroke, they both agreed “ *that they did hear a noise, as if several guns were fired off together;* ”—and as to their sensation of their stroke, “ *it seemed as if a chord of wood, lighted up into one flame, had fallen upon them, and wrapped them up in fire.* ”

“ They were miserably burnt, (if philosophers will allow me to apply such a term to lightning) in several parts of their bodies, and the skin came away, as if by boiling water. The burn of one them reached from the shoulder to the hip, upon the left side, and was about six inches broad; in some places it ran in upon the belly, with a kind of ray, like those which painters give to the sun. But the most remarkable effects of this dreadful stroke were the following, equally and uniformly alike upon the three boys. Several holes, some capable of receiving a large bullet, some a pea, and some a grain of shot were made in the posteriors of each boy; occasioned, we supposed by the lightning’s passing through the body by the shortest course, and so discharging itself here
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into the common mass, through those parts which were most in contact with the earth ; for each boy sat upon the ground. The legs of only one boy were burnt ; this we endeavoured to account for, by supposing that this boy sat with his legs stretched out, which brought them in contact with the earth, as well as the breech ; whilst the others had them drawn up, resting upon their feet ; in which position the whole of the flash was discharged through the breech. We were encouraged in this supposition by observing that the boy who suffered in his legs, did not suffer so much in his posteriors as the others. Upon examining their breeches, we found that the destructive element had made and passed through several holes, corresponding exactly with those it had made in the flesh. The breeches of one of the boys were made of leather ; the flame, in passing through these, left a burn to every hole, like that made by a spark in passing through a quire of paper in electrical experiments. The shirt and stockings of one boy were rent, without any marks of being burnt or singed, whilst the waistcoat and shirt of another had several holes, evidently burnt,

burnt, as if done by the sparks of a smith's forge.

“ In short, when we viewed the condition of these poor boys, and considered what a volume of lightning they must have been enveloped in, we were at a loss to conceive how they escaped with the breath of life, unless we may be allowed to attribute their preservation (next under God) *to their cloaths* being very wet before they came to the tree, which undoubtedly served *as conductors* to a considerable part of the destructive fluid.

“ The second instance happened at Savannah, in Georgia, in the month of July, 1773. A vessel bound to Providence, in the Bahama Islands, lying off one of the wharfs, had on her deck *twelve horses*: the Captain had cleared out at the custom-house, and was preparing to weigh anchor in order to sail, when, as is usual at this time of the year, a tremendous gust came on; the lightning struck the ship's mast, which conducted the fluid among the horses, and instantly killed ten of them: the two which escaped, were just taken on board, and a short time before had been swimming in Savannah

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river; hence we may conclude, that their *wet* condition protected them from the effects of the lightning."

Notwithstanding accidents by lightning are very frequent in North America, and the great usefulness of Dr. Franklin's rods are acknowledged, yet you will find them erected on very few houses. Many of the religious sectaries in Pennsylvania are averse to their use; they consider it as presumption, and say, they will trust to *the first great Cause*; though at the same time these very people are taking physic, and get cupped and bled, in order to prevent themselves from being sick and diseased.

Thus far we have contemplated the early life of Dr. Franklin, spent in philosophical investigation, in founding schools, diffusing knowledge, and producing a variety of useful inventions for the good of society.—In these we admire and revere him!—But we must now proceed to the political part of his character, the examination of which cannot afford so many pleasing sensations as we have already experienced. Indeed, we would express our sentiments on this occasion in the elegant language of a little poem, which

which is said to be inscribed on a chamber-stove, in the form of an urn, invented by the Doctor, and so contrived, that the flame, instead of ascending, descended.

I.

Like a Newton sublimely he soar'd,
To a summit before unattain'd ;
New regions of science explor'd,
And the palm of philosophy gain'd.

II.

With a spark that he caught from the skies,
He display'd an unparallel'd wonder ;
And we saw with delight and surprize,
That his rod could protect us from thunder.

III.

Oh, had he been wise to pursue
The path which his talents design'd,
What a tribute of praise had been due,
To the teacher and friend of mankind !

IV.

But to covet political fame,
Was in him a degrading ambition ;
A spark which from Lucifer came,
And kindl'd the blaze of Sedition.

V.

Let Candour then write on his urn,
 Here lies the renowned inventor,
 Whose flame to the skies ought to burn,
 But inverted, descends to the centre.

Dr. Franklin had passed the meridian of life before he rendered himself conspicuous as a politician. His opposition to the proprietary government, and his endeavours to introduce a *royal one*, first recommended him in this character to the notice of his fellow-citizens: neither was it long until he got into favour with the then English ministry, by scheming new regulations for the management of the post-offices in America, and the increase of the post-tax. The display of his talents on these and some other occasions, procured him the place of joint post-master-general, which gave him the superintendence of all the post-offices in the several provinces. Possessed of every accomplishment to acquire popularity, he obtained a seat in the Assembly, and united in his efforts, with Mr. Joseph Galloway, against the proprietary interest; and in 1764, was appointed agent to transact the business of the province at London: so extensive was his

his reputation at this period, that he was nominated, soon after, agent for three other provinces, New Jersey, Virginia, and Georgia.

The affair of the stamp-act coming on, the Doctor found full employment in opposing it ; and exhibited likewise a specimen of the duplicity of his character ; for though he was continually writing and arguing against it, yet he asked and obtained the place of stamp-master for one of his friends in Philadelphia ; and recommended another for the state of Maryland ; but on the repeal of the act, that his Philadelphia friend might not be disappointed of a place, he got him provided for in the American customs ; and. what crowns the whole, it has been said, that he advised this person to sell that place to the highest bidder, as soon as he could ; alledging as a reason, that Great Britain would shortly have no custom-houses in America. There are others who have asserted, that, though the Doctor opposed the stamp-act in England, yet he was the original projector of it. The history of the matter is, that, some years since, the Doctor happened to be at General Braddock's table, then in the province of Maryland ;

land ; that the General was complaining of the backwardness of the provinces to raise the supplies, and unite for the common good ; when Mr. Franklin said, that a stamp duty, enacted at home, for all the colonies, would create an independent revenue to the Crown.—These words, or words to that effect, are well remembered by several persons of credit.

It further appears, that the stamp-act had been long a favourite scheme of his, from a manuscript written on the subject before he went to London as agent, which had been seen and read by several gentlemen at Philadelphia. In this performance, this patron of liberty projected a variety of ways and means, such as, a stamp-act, a poll-tax, circulating Exchequer bills upon mortgages bearing interest in the Exchequer in England ; a general excise scheme, and a postage on ship-letters.—Thus we see he originally had no objection to internal taxes, provided he and his friends could have the management, and, consequently, derive emolument from them.

Having passed an examination before the House of Commons, at the time of the
stamp

stamp act, he published a pamphlet of the same, which was circulated in every part of America, though it was much doubted whether the questions and answers are justly represented. However, he was indefatigable in his exertions, until a repeal of that act was obtained. But nothing tended more to widen the breach between the mother country and the colonies than the Doctor's inflammatory correspondence to his friends, who were men of revolution principles; and, notwithstanding their plausibility and pretensions of obtaining a redress of grievances and reconciliation, yet they were artfully employed to spread the flame of discord, excite an implacable hatred, and to propagate the Doctor's political nostrums throughout the country. These were the *chiefs* who afterwards embraced every opportunity to inculcate on the minds of the people, that America must one day or other become free and independent; that it was absurd to suppose such a vast continent could long be equitably governed by a little insignificant island, at three thousand miles distance, whose king could know nothing of them,

them, but through the medium of corrupt and interested governors.

The repeal of the stamp act did not remove the jealousies of the Americans; it rather taught them to expect future concessions in their favour; hence they demanded the repeal of several other subsequent acts, until the destruction of the tea at Boston had matured the quarrel, and they began to throw off all disguise. A little before this period, the American newspapers were filled with the most virulent declamations against the king and ministry. For many of these, we were indebted to Mr. Samuel Adams, the Doctor's principal agent and correspondent, who was continually publishing extracts of his letters from London, though not with his name, yet as from a gentleman in a public character, and a warm friend to the Colonies. Among many others we shall give the following as a specimen :

“ Now is the time of trial,” says the Doctor; “ now will all Europe see whether
 “ the Americans are possessed of virtue: the
 “ eyes of all are turned to your part of the
 “ globe, in eager expectation of discover-
 “ ing

“ ing your sentiments, in regard to the part
 “ you will act, since the partial repeal; the
 “ particulars of which, with the debates
 “ thereon, you will see by the English prints.
 “ Your conduct at this juncture will, in a
 “ great measure, determine your future fate,
 “ as the omission of the duty on tea in the
 “ repeal, is left as the test of American li-
 “ berty. It is scarcely possible, my dear
 “ friend, for you to conceive the anxiety I
 “ shall feel, till I hear of your determina-
 “ tion, as on that the very existence of the
 “ ministry in a great measure depends:
 “ They flatter themselves with the expect-
 “ ation of seeing the provinces divided, that
 “ some will chose to import, which must in
 “ a little time induce the rest to follow the
 “ same steps; but your real friends think
 “ better of you, and I cannot be persuaded
 “ that you will now, after so noble a stand,
 “ sell your birthright for a mess of pottage.
 “ It is only necessary for you to be true to
 “ yourselves, and all will be well in the end,
 “ as your friends here are composed of the
 “ most sensible and important characters in
 “ the nation, who must in time bear down
 “ all opposition. Be steady—be virtuous—

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“ and

“ and, as king Harry observed to his men,
 “ (just entering on action), dishonour not
 “ your mothers; now attest that those
 “ whom you called fathers did beget you.”

Again, “ It gives me great pleasure to
 “ hear that our people are steady in their
 “ resolutions of non-importation, and in the
 “ promoting of industry among themselves.
 “ They will soon be sensible of the benefit
 “ of such conduct, though the acts should
 “ never be repealed to their full satisfac-
 “ tion. For their earth and their sea, the
 “ true source of wealth and plenty, will go
 “ on producing; and if they receive the
 “ annual increase, and do not waste it as
 “ heretofore, in the gewgaws of this coun-
 “ try, but employ their spare time in manu-
 “ facturing necessaries for themselves, they
 “ must soon be out of debt; they must soon
 “ be easy and comfortable in their circum-
 “ stances, and even wealthy. I have been
 “ told that in some of our country courts
 “ heretofore, there were every quarter se-
 “ veral hundred actions of debt, in which
 “ the people were sued by shopkeepers for
 “ money due for British goods, as they
 “ were called, but in fact *evils*. What a
 “ loss

“ loss of time this must occasion to the
 “ people, besides the expence! And how
 “ can freemen bear the thought of subject-
 “ ing themselves to the hazard of being de-
 “ prived of their personal liberty, at the
 “ caprice of every petty trader, for the pal-
 “ try vanity of tricking out himself in the
 “ *flimsy* manufactures of Britain, when they
 “ might, by their own industry and inge-
 “ nuity, appear in good substantial, honour-
 “ able homespun! Could folks but see what
 “ numbers of merchants, and even shop-
 “ keepers here, make great estates by Ame-
 “ rican folly;—how many shops of A. B.
 “ C. and Company, with wares *for exporta-*
 “ *tion to the Colonies*, maintain each shop
 “ three or four partners and their families,
 “ every one with his country house and
 “ equipage, where they live like princes, on
 “ the sweat of our brows; pretending in-
 “ deed, sometimes, to wish well to our pri-
 “ vileges, but on the present important oc-
 “ casion, few of them affording us any assis-
 “ tance; I am persuaded that indignation
 “ would supply our want of prudence; we
 “ should disdain the thraldom we have so
 “ long been held in by this mischievous
 E 2 “ commerce,

“ commerce, reject it for ever, and seek
 “ our resources, where God and Nature
 “ have placed them, *within ourselves.*”

Such were the lectures Dr. Franklin transmitted from London to his friend Adams, who made them the subject of his harangues at the Boston town-meetings ; and communicated their contents, with his circular letters, to the Committees and Councils of Safety in the several provinces. The flame of liberty was now in a blaze, from New Hampshire to Georgia ; and some enthusiasts attributed its ardour and extent to the special influence of Heaven ; but sober reason may plainly discover, that the spirit of opposition to the mildest and best government in the world, originated with a *knot* of most subtle and designing men, whose abilities for the work are scarcely to be paralleled in any age or country. Thus did our philosophic Doctor appear an enemy to the government, manufactures and commerce of a nation, from whom he had received distinguished honours and great emoluments.— But we shall not accuse him with ingratitude ; though it cannot be denied, that, instead of sincerely recommending such measures

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tures as were of a conciliatory nature, his pen, his tongue, his every faculty, were sedulously engaged to encrease the fears, and to inflame the minds of his countrymen:—nothing less than Independence would satisfy this Machiavel; and independence was at length obtained, with Bankruptcy and Disgrace.

This boasted independent sovereignty has now been in the hands of a democracy for thirteen years; and so far have the people been from obtaining the manifold blessings for which they contended, that they have universally declared, that they could not be in a worse situation; and therefore, as an experiment, have consented to a change of their first Confederation. Their persons, property and commerce have lost that security which they enjoyed as British subjects; and they are now humbly imitating a constitution, which Franklin, and other theoretical politicians taught them to despise. The manufactures of Great Britain are called “flimsy;” but the people know them to be good, necessary, and substantial; and, since the peace, have given them a decided preference; for these despised manufactures, at
this

this day, make three-fourths of the American importations.

But to return.—Being dismissed from his office of post-master, for some mal-practice therein, he left London, and went speedily to America, with a firm purpose of supporting the cause of liberty, as it was then called, and to give his advice and information to the numerous Whig Affociations, then formed in every colony. In the spring of 1775, the Doctor had an opportunity of electrifying the whole continent with the news of the battle of Lexington. Many were his pathetic descriptions of this unlucky affair, which so lacerated and extended the wound between the two countries, as to render all ideas of reconciliation nugatory. At length appeared in the public prints a copy of his laconic, but significant letter to one of his quondam intimate friends, Mr. Strahan, late his Majesty's law-printer, and a member of parliament for Malmfbury.

“ Philadelphia, July 5, 1775.

“ Mr. Strahan,

“ YOU are a member of that parliament,
 “ and one of that majority which has doomed
 “ my

“ my country to destruction.—You have
“ begun to burn our towns, and murder our
“ people!—Look upon your hands!—They
“ are stained with the blood of relations!—
“ You and I were long friends—you are
“ now my enemy—and I am,

“ Your’s,

B. FRANKLIN.”

The American contest now wore a very serious aspect.—Being determined to persist in their opposition to the acts of the British parliament, it was necessary they should be furnished with the means of defence. Hard money they had little or none; and equally scanty was their supply of arms and ammunition. In this dilemma, the emission of a continental paper currency was suggested. Dr. Franklin was among the first that demonstrated the necessity of its adoption; without which they could have made but a short and faint resistance against the mother-country. The first emission of three millions of dollars took place July 25, 1775, with a promise of redemption in three years, *as gold and silver*; and before the Doctor left America, the latter end of 1776, they had emitted

emitted and expended upwards of twenty-one millions, which passed as equal to specie. How this money could be redeemed began to puzzle Congress; and some of the members, when the Doctor was about to depart from France, asked his advice on the subject; he replied, "Never mind it, we shall pay the expences of the war mostly this way; emit your continental currency as long as it will pay for work, paper, and lamp-black."

It is certainly fact, that the people in general, at the beginning of the contest, had no fixed plan or idea of contending for independence: the language of the public addresses and resolutions from every colony were replete with terms of loyalty to their sovereign, and with earnest desires of reconciliation; but yet it has been more than suspected that the Doctor, and a few others, extended their views to that object, and recommended such measures as had a tendency to its accomplishment.—"A man is known by his associates." The late General Lee was now in this country, and upon a footing of the strictest intimacy with the Doctor.—His active, fiery zeal led him from one colony to another, embit-

embittering and inflaming the minds of the people against the parent state ; but, having less caution and command of his temper than some other crafty politicians, he would frequently divulge the secret, and openly recommend the doctrine of independence.

—At length the important question was brought forward in Congress, while the Doctor was a representative for the province of Pennsylvania : It was debated several days, and met with considerable opposition. Some very able speakers appeared against it ; amongst whom were Mr. Dickinson, author of the Farmer's Letters ; Mr. Wilson, an eminent lawyer ; and Mr. Galloway ; neither were all the delegates instructed as to their votes on this point ; which some writers have erroneously asserted. But our Doctor stood as firm as a rock to his favourite independence ; neither oratory nor argument could influence him to give up his concerted plan ; and those who were opposed to it, observing the unalterable determination of their antagonists, finally agreed to the resolution.

This object being gained, ambition pointed out a new prospect to the Doctor. Well

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aware that the American resources principally consisted in old rags and lamp black, metamorphosed into continental currency; and though the paper scheme was successful to admiration, yet as the people could not at present hear any thing of taxes, and great sums of money would be wanted to carry on their extensive military operations, there was a possibility that such a frequent emission of paper currency would induce a depreciation, and endanger the public safety.—The Doctor therefore turned his eyes once more towards Europe, as the country from whence alone the needful supplies could be procured. He accordingly obtained from Congress a commission, as agent for the court of France, judging it a proper theatre for the display of his talents, and where his highly-extolled philosophic reputation would probably be admired, and conciliate the affections of the nation towards him; and so it happened; for all ranks of people on his arrival, vied with each other in paying respect to this hoary-headed crafty sage. He took passage on board a ship of 16 guns, commanded by Captain Weeks, who was so fortunate as to take two prizes near Bourdeaux,

deaux, which the Doctor sold for him a few days after, but not publicly, as the Americans had not yet obtained that liberty ; and they arrived at Nantz the 17th December, 1776. Shortly after his appearance at the court of France, where he was received with every mark of distinction and esteem, he with Mr. Deane his colleague, wrote several letters to Lord Stormont, the English ambassador, relative to the exchange of prisoners, but received no answer.

However, the American agents did not desist from writing and remonstrating against the treatment their people received in the prisons of England and elsewhere, but even proceeded to threaten *severe retaliation*, and observed to his lordship, “ that for the sake
 “ of humanity, it was to be wished that men
 “ would endeavour to alleviate as much as
 “ possible the unavoidable miseries attending a state of war. It has been said that
 “ among the civilized nations of Europe,
 “ the ancient horrors of that state are much
 “ diminished ; but the compelling men by
 “ chains, stripes and famine, to fight against
 “ their friends and relations, was a new
 “ mode of barbarity, which the English na-

“ tion alone had the honour of inventing.”
 —But these and other asperities of language could not produce any other answer from the king’s ambassador, than that “ he received *no letters from rebels, except when they came to ask mercy.*”

Perhaps no man cherished a greater enmity to the mother country, or was more fruitful in resources to injure its commerce and navigation, than Dr. Franklin. In conjunction with his colleague, several American privateers were privately fitted out from the ports of France; and there is little doubt but it was his advice that brought out such a number of New England privateers, cruising every where to intercept our trade. The loss of our merchants was considerable; and though we were not at war with France, yet they afforded the Americans every assistance and protection in their power. This produced a memorial to the ministers of France, couched in the following terms :

“ Independent of what sovereign states
 “ owe to themselves, according to the fa-
 “ cred law of Nature and nations, in cases
 “ where any of their provinces may rebel;
 and

“ and not to mention that should the efforts
 “ of the English American colonies prove
 “ successful, the provinces appertaining to
 “ other states, might be induced to make a
 “ similar attempt; the subscribing party
 “ is instructed to represent to the enlighten-
 “ ed ministers of France, that our colonies
 “ have nearly formed themselves into an
 “ independent and formidable empire.—
 “ Should they not be timely prevented, it
 “ will by no means be difficult (considering
 “ their powerful resources of every kind)
 “ for them to attempt the conquest of other
 “ provinces in America, richer and better
 “ situated.—France and Spain have there-
 “ fore every thing to apprehend for the
 “ safety of their colonies, should those of
 “ Great-Britain succeed in their designs.”

“ The subscribing party hopes that these
 “ reflections may induce his Most Christian
 “ Majesty not only to continue his pacific
 “ intentions at this particular juncture, but
 “ also that he may so far extend his neu-
 “ trality and friendship, as to prohibit the
 “ merchants in his dominions from afford-
 “ ing those of America (with whom they
 “ now trade openly) such vast succours as
 “ have

“ have hitherto been furnished. Above all,
 “ it is hoped that Messrs. Deane & Franklin
 “ may be restrained in those measures,
 “ which have been gradually unfolded, so
 “ as to become less equivocal. The papers
 “ annexed to this memorial will so amply
 “ display the nature and progress of Mr.
 “ Deane’s negotiations, that after perusal,
 “ it might reasonably be expected that he
 “ should be delivered up.”

“ STORMONT.”

After the delivery of this memorial, the
 French minister, Comte de Vergennes, af-
 fected to appear a little shy towards Messrs.
 Franklin & Deane; and it was but seldom
 known when they were honoured with an
 audience: But this indifference did not
 continue; an event took place which stript
 off all disguise. The news of the surrender
 of the British army under General Burgoyne
 to General Gates, at Saratoga, October 17,
 1777, arrived in France, at a time when
 the council of that nation was in a state of
 equilibrium respecting American affairs, un-
 determined which way to act; but the
 éclat of this success soon turned the scale,
 and

and fixed them in their attachment to the rising states; whose splendor and reputation were now so much admired, that a gentleman just returned from making the tour of France, observed, “ that from Dunkirk to Brest, from thence through Bourdeaux to Bayonne, then through Toulouse to Marseilles, and lastly, through Lyons and Dijon to Paris, he met neither men nor women, in high or low stations, but were friends to the Americans.”

The news of the defeat and captivity of General Burgoyne, was received in France with as much joy as if a victory of their own troops had been announced. Franklin, with his usual address and industry, improved the golden opportunity, and representing the resources, commerce, and population of his country, in the most advantageous point of view, so attracted the attention of the court of France to the object of his mission, that on the 16th of December, Mons. Girard, secretary of the king's council of state, waited upon the American plenipotentiaries, and informed them *by order of the king*, “ that after long and full consideration of their affairs and
“ pro-

“ propositions in council, it was decided,
 “ and his Majesty was determined, *to ac-*
 “ *knowledge their independence*, and make
 “ treaties with them of alliance and com-
 “ merce; and that he would not only ac-
 “ knowledge but support their indepen-
 “ dence, by every means in his power:—
 “ That in doing this, he might possibly be
 “ soon engaged in a war, with all the ex-
 “ pences, risque, and damage, usually at-
 “ tending it; yet he should not expect any
 “ compensation from them on that account,
 “ nor pretend that he acted wholly for their
 “ sakes, since besides his real good will to
 “ them and their cause, it was manifestly
 “ the interest of France, that the power of
 “ England should be diminished by their
 “ separation from it.”

The treaties were concluded and signed
 at Paris, the 30th of January, 1778.—An
 event of such magnitude and importance,
 and pregnant with such consequences, as
 enabled the revolting colonies effectually to
 oppose the parent state.

Thus it appeared that the same man, who
 had published his rules for reducing a great
 empire to a small one, was capable of ma-
 king

king their application ; and hence it has been remarked, that his negotiations with the court of France required uncommon abilities, and his success in the arduous work proves that during a long life, he had practically studied the philosophy of man.

France having taken a decided part in favour of America, nothing could be expected but an immediate war with England.—The declaration delivered at London by their ambassador, and the great naval preparations in every part of the kingdom, plainly indicated their design. The Sieur Girard was appointed ambassador to the New States ; but before his departure, our crafty Doctor had planned a most excellent scheme for the surprize and capture of the British fleet and army, whether on the Delaware, or its borders.—The Count D'Estaing with a superior fleet was employed for this purpose, and would most certainly have effected it, if fortunately the winds and weather had not prevented.

The French admiral, meeting with bad weather, arrived too late ; as the English army had evacuated Philadelphia, and their fleet got safe to Sandy Hook, so that he

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found himself fully employed the remaining part of the season, to manœuvre and contend with one of the most able officers in the British navy.

Reflecting on the strange vicissitudes of human life, we are led (very naturally) to contemplate a striking contrast. A few years ago we saw the Britons and Americans engaged as brethren, in one common cause, and arduously endeavouring to limit and destroy the French power, in every part of the globe. We now see a transition unexpected, surprising, and unnatural ! Those very people who are " flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone," uniting with our rivals and avowed enemies, and attempting to destroy that indulgent parent from whom they had received their existence and prosperity : And all this principally brought about by the craft and agency of a self-taught philosopher and politician, who in his early years, wheeled a barrow loaded with printed papers, in the streets of Philadelphia, and got his livelihood by working at the press. Thus do the base things of this world and things that are despised, confound the things which are mighty ; probably to teach us that however extensive our empire, however
great

great our exaltation, little causes may frustrate the best concerted schemes, and that pride was never made for man!

The attachment of the French nation to America was carried, at this time, to such a degree of enthusiasm, as is difficult to be conceived: There were few persons who bore an interested part in the contest, but employed their most famous artists and first writers. But among so many characters Dr. Franklin was distinguished in a particular manner; and of the several homages that were incessantly offered to his merit, none could be more flattering than the provinces of France contending with each other, for having given birth to some of his ancestors, and endeavouring to prove by the similarity of names, that he derived his descent from among them. The following extract from the Gazette of Amiens, the capital of Picardy in France, is a convincing proof of what is here advanced. "The king's painter at Paris," says the editor, "has lately displayed the utmost efforts of his genius, in an elegant picture, dedicated to the genius of Franklin.—Mr. Franklin is represented in it, opposing with one hand the Ægis of

Minerva to the thunderbolt, which he first knew how to fix by his conductors, and with the other commanding the God of War to fight against Avarice and Tyranny; whilst America nobly reclining upon him, and holding in her hand the fasces, a true emblem of the union of the American States, looks down with tranquillity on her defeated enemies. The painter in this picture most beautifully expressed the idea of this Latin verse which has been so frequently applied to Dr. Franklin.

“ Eripuit de cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.”

“ The name of Franklin is sufficiently celebrated that one may glory in bearing it, and a nation pride herself in having given birth to the ancestors of a man, who has rendered his name so famous. We think ourselves entitled to dispute with the English nation, an honour of which they have rendered themselves unworthy. Franklin appears to be rather of a French than an English original. It is certain that the name of Franklin or Franquelin is very common in Picardy, especially in the districts of Vimeu and Ponthieu. It is very probable that one of the Doctor's ancestors has been an inhabitant

bitant of this country, and has gone over to England with the fleet of Jean de Biencourt, or that which was fitted out by the nobility of this province. In genealogical matters, there are bolder conjectures than this; there was at Abbeville, in the 15th and 16th century, a family of the name of Franklin. We see in the public records of the town, one John and Thomas Franquelin, woollen drapers, in 1521; this family remained at Abbeville till the year 1600: they have since been dispersed through the country, and there are still some of their descendants so far as Auz la Chateau. These observations are a new homage which we offer to the genius of Franklin."

It was in this year that his most Christian Majesty constituted, by letters-patent, the royal medical society of France. It consists of thirty members, all doctors of physic, and residents in Paris, of whom twenty are to be of the medical faculty of the university of that city; of sixty other members, residents in any other part of France; and of sixty other members, subjects of any other state. Besides these, the society may honour with the title of Correspondents any number

ber of gentlemen in France, or elsewhere.—
The *King* was pleased to distinguish Dr. Franklin by placing his name at the head of the list of its foreign members.

Such was the manner in which the Doctor was honoured and celebrated in France; his influence also extended to the court of Spain, and diffused a favourable opinion of the American war in several other countries. Nothing was now wanting, on his part, to raise the spirits of the Americans; and his letters to his numerous correspondents were particularly written for this express purpose. “All Europe is for you,” says he in one of his epistles. “The separate constitutions of the several states are also translating and publishing here, which afford abundance of speculation to the politicians of Europe; and it is a very general opinion, that if you succeed in establishing your liberties, you will, as soon as peace is restored, receive an immense addition of numbers and wealth from Europe, by the families who will go over to participate of your privileges, and carry their estates with them. Tyranny is so generally established in the rest of the world that the prospect of an asylum in
America,

America, for those who love liberty, gives general joy, and your cause is esteemed the cause of mankind."

Great was the Doctor's success in procuring assistance of every kind from these new allies; and in money affairs, the Congress looked up to him in every emergency. His friend Mr. Silas Deane, in a letter from Paris to Colonel William Duer of New York, represents his important services at the court of France, in the following language:

"Congress drew bills on Mr. President Laurens, as being in Holland, many months before he sailed from America; they drew on Mr. Jay long before his arrival in Spain; these bills have been honoured, and you in America have been taught to believe that it was from money received in Spain and Holland—no such thing. Those bills have been uniformly sent to Dr. Franklin for payment; even the salaries of Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams and their suits, have been drawn for on Dr. Franklin, who has paid them out of the monies received here. The agents of private states have been furnished with money for their exigencies, out of the sums granted for the support of our army; our ambaf-

ambassadors and agents have for some time past, cost us at least twenty thousand pounds sterling per annum. The relief of prisoners and other contingencies, more than as much more; all this has been taken from the money afforded us by France for our army.—Congress, though repeatedly advised by Dr. Franklin not to draw on him, have continued to draw without bounds, and generally without advice.”

From this view of affairs, it is evident that the address and abilities of this crafty politician, were of the highest consequence to the credit of congress; and that probably without him, they never could have supported the war at home, or sent any agents and commissioners abroad; but must have failed through want of the necessary resources: for how much soever America may plume herself with the ideas of Victory and Independence, yet we are sure, that without France, all her *own* efforts would have proved ineffectual. It was thus, for near nine years that Dr. Franklin was engaged in the most important scenes, as minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of France; and having rendered his country perma-

permanent and essential services, he returned to America in the month of September, 1785, in the ship London packet, Captain Truxton.

On his arrival at Philadelphia, he was received at the wharf by a vast number of citizens who attended him to his house with acclamations of joy; whilst the discharge of cannon and the ringing of bells announced the event to the country around. The Philadelphians appeared to vie with each other in exhibiting testimonies of their esteem. The House of Assembly, the faculty of the university, and other societies, presented him with their affectionate addresses; and in October following, he was elected governor of the state of Pennsylvania; in which office he continued to October, 1788.

Nothing could exceed the hopes formed by the people of America, from the recognition and establishment of their independence; and Dr. Franklin, during the whole contest, had by his letters and flattering representations, impressed them with the most extravagant notions of future dignity and prosperity. Fond of the whims and theories of their own brains, they expected their

new democratic constitutions would become the admiration of the world:—their commerce was to be as free as air, navies were to arise which would cover the ocean, and their manufacturers, aided by the numerous emigrants from Europe, were instantaneously to produce the finest fabrics. In short, all nations were to court their smiles and dread their frowns, and Great-Britain was to repeal her obnoxious navigation-act, and to sue for their alliance.

At the return of peace, these were the fond expectations of the Americans; but the Doctor on his accession to the chair of the first magistrate, found himself greatly disappointed. The state over which he presided was rent asunder with faction, and the other states of the union had lost all the credit, dignity and efficiency of government; their trade was circumscribed, and their merchants bankrupt. Amid these distresses, the resolutions and ordinances of their Congress were neglected and despised; and many began to doubt, whether there was any existing government. At length it was found requisite to call a general convention of the states, as an effort for regaining their credit,
and

and forming a more energetic constitution. They met at Philadelphia in 1788; and Dr. Franklin appeared amongst them as one of the representatives for the state of Pennsylvania. At the conclusion of their deliberations, the Doctor is said to have delivered the following speech, in which he expresses no great approbation of the new federal system, or any sanguine expectation from its adoption; but seems to recommend it as a matter of necessity.

“ MR. PRESIDENT,

“ I confess that I do not entirely approve of this constitution at present; but, Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it: For having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information, or fuller consideration, to change opinions, even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. It is therefore the older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment, and to pay more respect to the judgment of others. Most men indeed, as well as most sects in religion, think themselves in possession of all truth, and that wherever others

differ from them, it is so far an error. Steele, a Protestant, in a dedication tells the Pope, that the only difference between our two churches, in their opinions of the certainty of their doctrines, is, the Romish church is infallible, and the church of England never in the wrong.

“ But though many private persons think almost as highly of their own infallibility as that of their sect, few express it so naturally as a certain French lady, who in a little dispute with her sister said, I don’t know how it happens, sister, but I meet with nobody but myself that is *always* in the right. “ Il n’y a que moi qui a toujours raison.” In these sentiments, Sir, I agree to this constitution, with all its faults, if they are such; because I think a general government necessary for us, and there is no form of government, but what may be a blessing, if well administered: and I believe farther, that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupted as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other. I doubt
too,

too, whether any other convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better constitution; for when you assemble a number of men, to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble, with those men, all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interest, and their selfish views. From such an assembly, can a perfect production be expected? It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does; and I think it will astonish our enemies, who are waiting with confidence to hear that our councils are confounded, like those of the builders of Babel; and that our states are on the point of separation, only to meet hereafter for the purpose of cutting each other's throats.

“ Thus, I consent, Sir, to this constitution, because I expect no better; and because I am not sure that this is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors, I sacrifice to the public good: I have never whispered a syllable of them abroad—within these walls they were born, and here they shall die. If every one of us in returning to our constituents, were to report the objections he has
had

had to it, and endeavour to gain partizans in support of them, we might prevent its being generally received, and thereby lose all the salutary effects and great advantages resulting naturally in our favour among foreign nations, as well as among ourselves, for our real or apparent unanimity. Much of the strength and efficacy of any government in procuring, and in securing happiness to the people, depend on opinion ; on the general opinion of the goodness of that government, as well as of the wisdom and integrity of its governors.

“ I hope, therefore, that for our sakes, as a part of the people, and for the sake of our posterity, we shall act heartily and unanimously in recommending this constitution where-ever our influence may extend, and turn our future thoughts and endeavours to the means of having it well administered.

“ On the whole, Sir, I cannot help expressing a wish, that every member of the convention who may still have objections to it, would with me, on this occasion, doubt a little of his infallibility, and to make *manifest* our unanimity, put his name to this instrument.”

Then

Then the motion was made for adding the last formula, *viz.*

“ Done in convention, by the unanimous consent, &c.” which was agreed to, and added accordingly.

This was the last speech the doctor ever delivered in a public capacity; but while his faculties continued in vigour, the press teemed with his admonitory political productions. Men seldom or never relinquish those studies and pursuits to which they have been early accustomed; hence we see the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at the age of eighty-seven, preaching at Bath, and taking his annual circuit through the kingdom; and Dr. Franklin, when nearly at the same age, was busily employed in his favourite schemes, and entertained weekly *at his own house, a Society for Political and Philosophical Inquiries*; so just is the observation of the poet:

Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu.

The doctor was never distinguished as an orator; in public bodies, or private societies, he seldom troubled his audience with long speeches: He seemed always to have
been

been careful to hide his own sentiments, but read the faces, and watched with a sedulous attention to discover those of others.

As a *writer*, his publications are numerous, consisting chiefly of short pieces on philosophical, political, and economical subjects, and most of them calculated to serve some present purpose. Such is his late piece entitled “ Information to those who would wish to remove to America.”—The design of which is, to encourage the farmers and mechanics of Europe to emigrate to that country.

But to obviate the pernicious tendency of this performance, it becomes necessary to provide an antidote against the Doctor’s emigrating instructions.—I shall therefore, as an impartial observer, bestow a few strictures thereon, and produce the unquestionable authority of several respectable writers, by which it will appear, that the citizens of America in general are not happier than the subjects living under the benign influence and protection of the British constitution.

The Doctor informs us, that “ it cannot
“ be worth any man’s while, *who has the*
“ *means of living at home*, to expatriate him-
“ self

“ self in hopes of obtaining a profitable
 “ civil office in America ; and as to military
 “ offices, they are now at an end with the
 “ war, the armies being disbanded.”—We
 perfectly coincide with this sentiment, as any
 man must be tainted with some degree of
 insanity, to leave a certainty for uncertainty :
 few civil offices in America are worth the
 attention of a man of enterprize and genius ;
 and, as to their military offices, long before
 the peace took place, they went a-begging,
 and could not recommend any person to the
 least degree of credit and reputation. In a
 subsequent sentence, the doctor speaks very
 contemptuously of “ *birth, persons of quality,*
and gentlemen.”—It is true indeed, that such
 characters are not the most eligible for the
 purposes of emigration ; but yet in every
 country, they have been and will be respect-
 ed—and whether the Doctor ever made the
 observation or not, it is certain, that the
 Americans are as fond of affecting the cha-
 racters of gentlemen, and persons of rank,
 as any people under heaven. Many of them
 emerging from very humble obscurity, and
 persons of the lowest occupations, have
 figured away in the cabinet and in the field ;

and it has been a most severe trial, perhaps worse than death, that after having tasted the sweets of distinction and military rank, the distresses and disappointments consequent to the establishment of peace, have obliged them to fall back into their former ranks, and to hide their diminished heads.

The Doctor further acquaints us, that
 “ *with regard to the encouragements for stran-*
 “ *gers from (the American) Government, they*
 “ *are only what are derived from good laws*
 “ *and liberty.*” Can any subject of the British government imagine that these young states are capable of making better laws than are existing in their own country? It may be confidently asserted that a greater security for life, liberty and property is nowhere generally enjoyed than in Great-Britain. A British act of parliament relative to any species of property may be trusted; but will the Americans place any reliance on an act of any of their states, respecting the various emissions of their paper currency?—Experience proves the contrary.—Their legislatures have all defrauded;
 “ there is none that has done good, no not
 one.”

one."—Ever since the peace, they have established iniquity for law, and deviated from the principles of rectitude and justice, in making such laws as violated private contracts, defrauded creditors, and cheated thousands, even their own poor soldiers, who suffered in the war, cold, nakedness, and hunger.

It is a universal complaint that scarce a debt, contracted by the people of these states, is *punctually* discharged; but every artifice is employed to procrastinate and finally evade payment. How unhappy is the consideration that the laws and justice of a country should see fraud and knavery reduced to a science, at which they seem to wink a most hearty approbation? and it may be justly admitted, that no people have ever afforded such astonishing proofs of a proficiency in this respect, in the short space of the last six years. This, although it should not have any evil influence on their future prospects, is pregnant with a train of mischievous effects and consequences, which are severely felt at present, and of necessity must ever attend it. It involves mechanics in ruin, merchants in difficulties, and brings perplexity and discouragement upon the honest farmer. By a

perseverance in such conduct, they have rendered themselves contemptible and unworthy to be credited at home or abroad. Knaves are the pest of society, and the bane of good neighbourhood; but there being so large a portion of this class of people throughout the United States, there is a constant necessity of suspicious vigilance among all; and the ill and apparently lucrative example, makes a deplorable impression on the rising generation. By these destructive miscreants, the honest and deserving become the prey of attorneys, who are in this respect a people *sui generis*, who always find their account in the dishonesty of the world. Should this fatal attachment to degenerate principles continue in America, it will of course tend to corrupt even the new federal legislature, and cause them to be equally fraudulent with the states legislatures, whose neglect of distributive justice has justly merited universal abhorrence.

The Doctor proceeds to describe what kind of persons they are, to whom an emigration to America may be advantageous, and what the advantages they may reasonably expect. “ *Hearty young labouring men,*
“ *who*

“ who understand the husbandry of corn and
 “ cattle, which is nearly the same in that
 “ country as in Europe, may easily establish
 “ themselves here. A little money saved of the
 “ good money they receive, while they work for
 “ others, enables them to buy land and begin
 “ their plantation, in which they are assisted
 “ by the goodwill of their neighbours and some
 “ credit.”

The picture drawn here of the facility
 with which hearty young men may establish
 themselves in farms and plantations, is more
 flattering than true. Let it be considered
 that the lands in America, for a considerable
 distance from the sea-coast, have been
 all taken up and occupied for many years.
 It is easy to perceive that any farms and
 plantations, in the settled parts of the country
 cannot be procured, but by purchase,
 some of them at 10 guineas per acre; and if
 an emigrant goes back four or five hundred
 miles from any market, what difficulties will
 he not experience, whilst felling the trees
 of the desert, and clearing his land for til-
 lage? What neighbours will he there find?
 I will inform him—some wretched bank-
 rupt people, who have fled from the settled
 parts

parts of the country, to be out of the reach of their creditors; others that are fugitives from the hands of justice; and others, whose lands on the sea-coast being worn out, have retreated to live in idleness by fishing and hunting, and a little tillage, much in the style and manner of Indians.—These people in general are destitute of money, and many of the comforts and conveniencies of life; cloathed in rags, they live in huts or log houses, in filth and wretchedness. It is easy to talk about money *to be* saved, the goodwill of neighbours and some credit, for the obtaining of a settlement; but in a country where money is scarcer than in any other in the world, it is no easy matter to get it; and credit is now out of the question; that benevolence and good-will which once subsisted, is quite done away—mutual confidence destroyed; and the distinctions of whig and tory, federalist and antefederalist, have taken place. The late war, and the difficulties of the present times, have embittered the minds of neighbours towards each other, and a man's foes will too often be those of his own household. In settlements *where* once hospitality and kindness reigned,
there

there you will now find distrust and enmity. As to *good* money, it is almost unknown in America:—guineas, half joes, and other species of gold coin, are all under weight, cut, sweated, and circumcised, that it requires great circumspection, when you receive a sum of money, to prevent being cheated.

But perhaps the Doctor calls the numerous kinds of American paper-currency—*good money*. It is much to be lamented that such multitudes of people ever took it as such: greater deceptions were never practised on any nation; and thousands of helpless families will have reason, for years to come, to deplore the injury, ruin and injustice they have suffered. The text of the Doctor's instructions, in this place, might read thus: "Hearty young husbandmen, who can endure the extremes of heat and cold, and can be daring enough to banish themselves *far* from civilized towns and populous cities, into desert woods and mountains, among a race of runnagates and crackers, equally wild and savage as the Indians, may emigrate to America—Poor artizans, of the necessary and useful kind, to supply those cultivators of the earth with utensils of the grosser

grosser sorts, which cannot be readily brought from Europe, may emigrate to this land of promise, where they must be very industrious, and shift hard for a living."——Surely they will revere the memory of the good Doctor for such kind information; but I am persuaded that many of them, having no inclination to become *white negroes*, will exert their industry for a livelihood among their own friends, and in their native country, from a conviction that, if they leave it, "*they ne'er will see the like again.*"

But we are assured, that "*all persons of moderate fortunes and capitals, who having a number of children to provide for, and are desirous of bringing them up to industry, and to secure estates for their posterity, have opportunities in America, which Europe doth not afford.*"

This proposition is worthy some attention, lest families of a moderate fortune should be ruined by making the experiment here recommended.—In the first place, it is extremely troublesome and expensive for people with families to cross the Atlantic; they will be necessarily subject to many inconveniencies and dangers, with which
such

such as have travelled are well acquainted. Their voyage to America, and the journey of several hundred miles back to the wilderness of the frontier settlements, for people of a moderate fortune cannot afford to buy land anywhere else, will almost, if not altogether, expend their "*moderate*" stock of cash. When they come there, they must build a hut or hog-house to live in, and begin to clear the land. Provisions of all kinds must be purchased at a dear rate, whilst they are employed about this; but suppose any of their family should fall sick, which is very common to people in a new climate, to what distress will they not be reduced in these frontier settlements? and it is an hundred to one, they will not be able to get a physician to assist them. Children in these back countries, so far from being brought up to industry, generally spend their time in hunting and shooting, and have little or no means of education. They are frequently to be seen running about, almost naked, in the woods of Virginia and North-Carolina.

But it is surprizing the doctor should commend America for the mechanic arts,

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when it is well known, that European workmen are always preferred, both for their industry and skill in business. In truth, there can be no comparison between the industry of the inhabitants of the United States and that of the people of Great Britain. What industry there is in America, is mostly to be found in the New England governments; travelling from thence to the southward, you will discover a great declension of this useful virtue, arising from the climate and manner of living. There is no country on the globe where the laborious part of the white people drink more spirituous liquors than in America. Instead of wholesome beer and cyder for their common drink, they make use of *grog*, a mixture of rum and water; the former in general is very indifferent; for it is either New England rum, which is called *stinkabus*, or new rum of the West-India islands. A mechanic or labouring-man accustomed to this liquid fire, finds that one tumbler creates a necessity for another, so that a habit of drinking this pernicious mixture is easily and imperceptibly acquired. As this habit strengthens in a man, his industry declines,
and

and he becomes at last enervated, and entirely devoted to rum. I have seen thousands of miserable and emaciated spectacles of this kind; and thousands are yearly destroyed by it. Hence the American mechanics, in general, are very indolent; and, during the war, I have frequently heard the masters of mechanic trades wish they could get journeymen from Europe—for this reason, because, when first they come out, they are more industrious, and not addicted to rum: but I am sorry to add, I have sometimes heard these same masters lament, that those European journeymen were soon corrupted, and fell into this beastly vice, thereby destroying their usefulness and their lives.

I shall now corroborate the truth of the observations I have made, by quoting some American testimonies. “ The Remarks of a Citizen of Philadelphia, on the Progress of Population, Agriculture, Manners and Government, in Pennsylvania, in a Letter to a Friend in England,” will give us a clear idea of forming settlements in that state, which is accounted the first and happiest in America.—It is as follows :

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“ The first settler in the woods is generally a man who has outlived his credit, or fortune, in the cultivated parts of the state. His time for migrating is in the month of April: his first object is to build a small cabin of rough logs for himself and family. The floor of this cabin is of earth, the roof is of split logs:—the light is received through the door; and, in some instances, through a small window made of greased paper. A coarser building adjoining this cabin affords shelter to a cow, and pair of good horses. The labour of erecting these buildings is succeeded by killing the trees on a few acres of ground near the cabin; this is done by cutting a circle round the trees, two or three feet from the ground. The ground around these trees is then plowed, and Indian corn planted in it—the season for planting this grain is about the 20th of May; it grows generally on new ground with but little cultivation, and yields in the month of October following, from 40 to 50 bushels per acre. After the 1st of September, it affords a good deal of nourishment to his family, in its green or unripe state, in the form of what is called *roasting ears*: his
family

family is fed during the summer by a small quantity of grain which he carries with him, and by fish and game. His cows and horses feed upon wild grass, or the succulent twigs of the woods. For the first year, he endures a great deal of distress from hunger, cold, and a variety of accidental causes; but he seldom complains, or sinks under them. —As he lives in the neighbourhood of Indians, he soon acquires a strong tincture of their manners. His exertions, while they continue, are violent; but they are succeeded by long intervals of rest: his pleasures consist chiefly in fishing and hunting: he loves spirituous liquors; and he eats, drinks and sleeps in dirt and rags in his little cabin. In his intercourse with the world, he manifests all the art which characterizes the Indians of our country. In this situation he passes two or three years. In proportion as population increases around him, he becomes uneasy and dissatisfied. Formerly his cattle ranged at large; but now his neighbours call upon him to confine them within fences, to prevent their trespassing upon their fields of grain. Formerly he fed his family with wild animals; but these, which
fly

fly from the face of man, now cease to afford him an easy subsistence; and he is compelled to raise domestic animals for the support of his family. Above all, he revolts against the operation of laws; he cannot bear to surrender up a single natural right, for all the benefits of government; and therefore he abandons his little settlement, and seeks a retreat in the woods, where he again submits to all the toils which have been mentioned.—There are instances of many men who have broken ground on bare creation, not less than four times this way, in different and more advanced parts of the state. It has been remarked, that the flight of this class of people is always increased by the preaching of the gospel. This will not surprise us, when we consider how opposite its precepts are to their licentious manner of living. If our first settler was the owner of the spot of land which he began to cultivate, he sells it at a considerable profit to his successor; but if, as is oftener the case, he was a tenant to some rich landholder, he abandons it in debt: however, the small improvements he leaves behind him, generally make

make it an object of immediate demand to a second species of settler.

“ This species of settler is generally a man of some property ; he pays one third or fourth part, in cash, for his plantation, which consists of three or four hundred acres, and the rest in sales or instalments, as it is called here ; that is, a certain sum yearly, without interest, till the whole is paid.—The first object of this settler is to build an addition to his cabin : this is done with hewed logs ; and as saw-mills generally follow settlements, his floors are made of boards, his roof is made of what is called clapboards, which are a kind of coarse shingles, split out of short oak logs : this house is divided by two floors, on each of which are two rooms ; under the whole, a cellar walled with stone : the cabin serves as a kitchen to his house. His next object is to clear a little meadow-ground, and plant an orchard of two or three hundred apple-trees : his stable is likewise enlarged ; and, in the course of a year or two, he builds a long barn, the roof of which is commonly thatched with rye-straw : he, moreover, encreases the quantity of his arable land ;

land; and, instead of cultivating Indian corn, he raises a quantity of wheat and rye; the latter is cultivated chiefly for the purpose of being distilled into whiskey. This species of settler by no means extracts all from the earth, which it is able and willing to give: His fields yield but a scanty increase, owing to the ground not being sufficiently plowed—the hopes of the year are often blasted by his cattle breaking through his half-made fences, and destroying his grain—his horses perform but half the labour that might be expected from them, if they were better fed; and his cattle often die in the spring from the want of provision and the delay of grass—his house as well as his farm, bear many marks of a weak tone of mind—his windows are unglazed, or, if they have any glass in them, the ruins of it are supplied with old hats or pillows. This species of settler is seldom a good member of civil or religious society: with a large portion of hereditary mechanical kind of religion, he neglects to contribute sufficiently towards building a church, or maintaining a regular administration of the ordinances of the gospel: with high ideas of liberty,

liberty, he refuses to bear his proportion of the debt contracted by its establishment in our country—he delights chiefly in company, sometimes drinks spirituous liquors to excess, will spend a day or two in every week, in attending political meetings; and thus he contracts debts which, if he cannot discharge in a depreciated paper currency, compel him to sell his plantation, generally in the course of a few years, to the third and last species of settler.

“ This species of settler is commonly a man of property and good character ; sometimes he is the son of a wealthy farmer, in one of the interior and ancient counties of the state.—His first object is to convert every spot of ground, over which he is able to draw water, into meadow ; where this cannot be done, he selects the most fertile spot on the farm, and devotes it by manure to that purpose—His next object is to build a barn, which he prefers of stone. This building is in some instances, 100 feet in front, and 40 in depth ; it is made very compact, so as to shut out the cold in winter ; for our farmers find that their horses and cattle, when kept warm, do not require near as much

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food, as when they are exposed to the cold. He uses economy likewise in the consumption of his wood: Hence he keeps himself warm in winter. His fences are every where repaired, so as to secure his grain from his own and neighbours' cattle. But further, he encreases the number of the articles of his cultivation, and instead of raising corn, wheat, and rye alone, he allots an acre or two of ground for a garden, in which he raises a large quantity of cabbage and potatoes. His newly-cleared fields afford him every year a large increase of turnips: Over the spring, which supplies him with water, he builds a milk-house; he likewise adds to the number and improves the quality of his fruit trees—his sons work by his side all the year, and his wife and daughters forsake the dairy and the spinning wheel to share with him in the toils of harvest.—The last object of his industry is to build a dwelling-house — this business is sometimes effected in the course of his life, but is oftener bequeathed to his son, or the inheritor of his plantation—and hence we have a common saying among our best farmers, “ that a son should always begin where

where the father left off,"—that is, he should begin his improvements by building a commodious dwelling-house, suited to the improvement and value of the plantation, &c.

" I have only to add, says this author, upon this subject, that the emigrants from Pennsylvania always travel to the southward. The soil and climate of the western parts of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, afford a more easy support to lazy farmers than the stubborn but more durable soil of Pennsylvania. *Here* our ground requires deep and repeated ploughing to render it fruitful; *there* scratching the ground once or twice affords tolerable crops. In Pennsylvania, the length and coldness of the winter, makes it necessary for the farmers to bestow a large share of their labour in providing for, and feeding their cattle; but in the southern states, cattle find pasture during the greatest part of the winter, in the fields or woods. For these reasons, the greatest part of the western countries of the states that have been mentioned, are settled by original inhabitants of Pennsylvania.—During the late war, the militia of Orange-County in North Carolina were enrolled,

and their number amounted to 3500, every man of whom had migrated from Pennsylvania. From this you will see, that our state (Pennsylvania) is the great out-port of the United States for Europeans; and that after performing the office of a sieve, by detaining all those people who possess the stamina of industry and virtue, it allows a passage to the rest, to those states, which are accommodated to their habits of indolence and vice."

Thus far this writer. I shall now briefly shew what Europeans may expect by emigrating to the Carolinas, that the sufferings and inconveniences arising from the climate of the country will more than over-balance any advantage they may gain. Dr. Ladd, an American poet, has given us a prospect of South Carolina, in the month of July, in the following poetical dress :

LO! wrapt in sunshine, all divinely bright,
 Fair CAROLINA rises to the fight;
 Here the *hot* sun, with fierce effulgent ray,
 Darts from his orb *intolerable* day:
 Unlike the northern beam, his fervid glow
 Pays fiercer courtship to the streams below;
 Hence from each stagnant pool thick vapours rise,
 Curl to the clouds, and blacken in the skies;

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On such dire fogs Death rides with murky wing,
 And here thy woes, O Carolina, spring !
 When vertic sun-beams wrap the mountain heads,
 And the red Dog-star's curfed venom spreads,
 Then smoke the hills ; for from the marshes round,
 The curling fog invades the higher ground.
 Unblefs'd is he who in this lucklefs hour,
 By dread experience proves its deathful pow'r.

But what rash man, celestial Muses, fay,
 Bends o'er yon mist-clad marsh his dang'rous way ?
 O stay, fond youth !—no living wight can bear
 The deadly influence of impoifon'd air ;
 Stay while thy frame the rigid fibres brace,
 And vermeil Health sports lovely in thy face ;
 Stay ere Phobera * thro' thy circling veins,
 Spread the dire prelude to more fatal pains :
 For know, dear youth, o'er yon drear marshes glide
 The mifts envenom'd miasmata † ride ;
 If in thy veins *they* taint the gen'rous blood,
 Fair Health, adieu ! and ev'ry earthly good.

Hence comes dire Tertian, Carolina's bane,
 And all the laggard 'amily of Pain :
 The van pale Horror leads, and Anguish blind ;
 Infernal Megrim follows close beyond.
 Taste not the air, for death is in the breeze,
 And the whole hydra of abhorr'd difeafe.

From certain knowledge I can testify to
 the truth of the Doctor's description, and
 that

* The Harbingers of Difeafe.

† The Seeds of Difeafes.

that he has not given it too high a colouring. It is really a dreadful climate! I was at Charlestown on the 1st of August, 1785; the weather at that time was remarkably hot; for Farenheit's thermometer stood at 105 degrees. At this fatal season of the year, the ship **GEORGE**, Captain W. Miskelly, in ten weeks from Belfast, arrived with 227 passengers on board. As these people had never breathed in so warm an atmosphere before, a considerable number of them fell sick; and, in the course of one week *fifty* of those unfortunate emigrants were consigned to the silent mansions of the dead. A young gentleman, who came passenger in the ship, was so alarmed at the event, that, without delay, he took his departure from Charlestown, on board a vessel bound to Philadelphia, and from thence returned to his native country; without the least desire of seeing, or knowing any thing more of the American continent.

It is certainly too little known, what a grave the southern provinces were formerly to Europeans. Multitudes emigrated annually, and the greater part soon died and were forgotten; while their mother-country

country did not perceive its loss. Within these last thirty years, there have been more emigrants from Ireland and Scotland than from England. A few years before the late revolution, I remember the emigration, nearly at one time, of a dozen English families to the Carolinas; they were all in the prime of life, very likely people, and sanguine in their expectations of making a great landed interest—but, alas! in about five years most of them were dead, and in less than ten, they were *all* EXTINCT! It would fill a volume to relate the many dismal scenes of sickness and mortality, of which it may be truly said,

-----“ The dead man’s knell

“ Is there scarce ask’d, for whom : and good men’s lives,

“ Expire before the flowers in their caps ;

“ Dying or e’er they sicken.”——

But let us finish this digression, and return to the Doctor’s pamphlet. “ *Bad examples to youth,*” says he, “ *are more rare in America.*” This we can by no means allow:—there is less industry; and from that circumstance alone, I should be apt to infer, that youth must see more vice. In the greatest
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part of America which I have travelled through, I have always observed the children of the poor neglected in the article of common education; and that even some parents, in good circumstances, had no opportunity of educating their children, for want of schoolmasters of ability: This cannot be denied; and it may also be added, that if the poor put their children to learn trades, it was seldom they learnt them to any degree of perfection. The master tradesmen in America always give the preference to what they call the old country workmen; and if any of these set up for themselves, they will always advertise, and inform the public, that they came from Europe, it being a recommendation to them; so that I must be bold to aver, that America is not the country for the children of the poor, either for good examples, to learn trades, or to acquire habits of industry.—However, the Doctor would persuade us, that it is the land “*for piety and religion* ;” but having had some opportunity of making an investigation on this head, what I shall deliver thereon, will be with the highest regard to truth. I will allow that the

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New-England governments *appear* to have made *some provision* for religion, in every part of their country—that many of them are strict observers of the sabbath, and regular in their attendance on the ordinances of the gospel; but of late years, there is a very visible decline among them from the simplicity and severity of their fore-fathers.—The other governments or states, averse to any ecclesiastical establishment, can neither boast of the power or form of godliness; some of them have scarce any religion at all.—Destitute of clergy, and places of worship, they are principally instructed by a few very inconsiderable sectaries. Any one acquainted with the present manners of the continent, must know that great numbers of what are *called* the better sort of people, hold religion in contempt—consider it as merely of a political nature, necessary for the good government of society. You can scarcely meet with a regular-bred physician or lawyer, who will not, to his intimate companions, profess himself a deist. Such is the present prevalence of infidelity, and such the rage for the perusal of deistical writers, that I am tempted to think, there will be a

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great decrease of regular learned divines among them, notwithstanding the late efforts for the establishment of Episcopacy: Many of those already ordained, have been *lay teachers*, taken from the Methodist Society. The translator of the Marquis De Chastellux's travels will confirm my ideas, relative to the increase of *deism*. In one of his notes, page 197, he says—"The truth is, " that the *prevalent* religion of the principal " inhabitants in America, and particularly " to the southward, is *pure deism*, called by " the name of philosophy in Europe; a spirit " which has contributed in no small degree " to *the revolution*, and produced their un- " fettered constitutions and toleration."

Among the proselytes to free-thinking, who have disgraced America, must be reckoned the famous Ethan Allen; a man whose turbulence of temper made a considerable noise at the beginning of the late contest. He was then an enthusiast, and summoned the garrison of Ticonderoga to surrender, "in the name of the Lord Jehovah and the Continental Congress."—Being afterwards taken prisoner by the British, he gave the world a doleful history of
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of his captivity : Since that, he has been chiefly employed in erecting a new government, called “ *the State of Vermont*,” in opposition to the claims of New-York and other states, and in writing his “ *Oracles of Reason*,” with the evident design of subverting all divine revelation—A blessed father and instructor truly, for a new settlement, which must have greatly improved in all moral and political happiness, under the example and guidance of so resplendent a luminary !

In composing this impious work, he tells us, “ he only used the bible and dictionary, and invariably endeavoured to make reason his guide,” though it is well known that the greatest part of it was pilfered from the writings of a European deist.

Nothing can exceed the freedom with which this daring man has treated the most awful and important subjects. Moses, the Saviour, and his Apostles, are considered as impostors, and the authenticity of the sacred scriptures denied in the most express terms. The feelings of every pious mind would be hurt at the rashness and ignorance of this pretender. I shall select one instance, among

an hundred that might be produced, of his total inability for criticism in biblical knowledge. “ Moses,” says he, “ in his last chapter of Deuteronomy, crowns his history with the particular account of his own death and burial.—So Moses, the servant of the Lord died there, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth Peor; but no man knew of his sepulchre unto this day; and Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eyes were not dim, nor his natural force abated; and the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.

“ This is the only historian,” says Allen, “ in the circle of my reading, who has ever given the public a particular account of his own death, and how old he was at that decisive period, *where* he died, who buried him, and *where* he was buried, and withal of the number of days his friends and acquaintances mourned and wept for him. I must confess, I do not expect to be able to advise the public of the term of my life, nor the circumstances of my death

“ death and burial, nor the days of the weeping or laughing of my survivors.”—

Had this self-taught opinionated man been conversant with the languages in which the scriptures were written, or with the commentators on the books of Moses, he would not have made thus free with the sacred text.

“ A little learning is a dangerous thing,” and yet a little learning would have taught him that the last chapter of Deuteronomy was not written by Moses, but by Joshua his successor; for in the original Hebrew manuscripts, the divisions of the books, chapters, and verses, were not as we read them in our English bibles; the present form or division of the bible hath been the work of modern times. Many religious and respectable societies in England, have been desirous to make some efforts for the civilization and instruction of the Indians; but here we see, in the internal part of the continent, among the green mountains, the principles of infidelity disseminated by an American, and the pious labours of good men ridiculed and despised.

I shall take my leave of Allen, with a poetical description of his person and morals:

“ ALLEN,

" ALLEN, escap'd from British jails,
 His tushes broke by biting nails,
 Descends from hyperborean skies,
 To tell the world—*the Bible lies*.
 See him on Green Hills, north afar,
 Glow, like a self-inkindled star,
 Prepar'd with mob-collecting club,
 Black from the forge of Belzebub,
 And grim with metaphysic scowl,
 With quill just pluck'd from wing of owl,
 As rage or reason, rise or sink,
 To shed his blood, or shed his ink ;
 Ere yet he goes to Susquehannah,
 To head new mobs, and feed with manna ;
 And teach the Pennsylvania quaker
 High blasphemies against his Maker.
 Behold him move, ye staunch divines !
 His tall brow bustling through the pines ;
 Like some old Sachem from his den,
 He treads once more the haunts of men.
 All front, he seems like wall of brass,
 And brays tremendous like an ass ;
 One hand is clench'd to batter noses,
 While t'other scrawls 'gainst *Paul and Moses*."

But though Allen is the first who has the
honour to write against divine revelation, on
 the American continent, yet there are others
 far more eminent than he has ever been,
 who have avowed similar sentiments. It
 has been more than whispered, that even
 Dr. Franklin himself was not averse to mo-
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dern *free-thinking* ; and that in his conversation with some intimates, the miracles of the Old Testament have frequently employed the fallies of his wit and humour.

This, however, is certain, that while he was employed in France, an American commissioner, in a letter to President Lawrens, charged him with deism ; and that this letter was read or communicated to Congress. —In private life this philosopher was not exempted from the little imperfections and weaknesses of human nature : irregular in his addresses to the Cyprian goddess, the legal partner of his bed complained of infidelities. It is well known, he had mistresses plenty ; and there are several living testimonies of his licentious amours. —A gentleman of Philadelphia, who was very intimate with him, has frequently told the following anecdote : that walking some years since in an afternoon, near the doctor's house, he perceived a quarrel between two females before his door. On approaching nearer, he found that one of them was the doctor's housekeeper, and the other a comely washerwoman, who had been also honoured with his intimate acquaintance : the one
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was in place, the other *cashiered*; and therefore it could be no wonder they had no great esteem for each other. The contest was sharp both in words and blows; the streets re-echoed with their shrieks, and their caps flew in pieces; while the Doctor, from a window, beheld the battle, and laughed most heartily.—*Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*; and philosophers have their frailties like other men.

In converse with his friends and acquaintance, the Doctor was affable and obliging, and frequently indulged himself in relating entertaining and laughable anecdotes, which were not lost for want of gathering. Possessing strong mental abilities, a collection of his common sayings would form an intellectual banquet: his letters to his correspondents were full of them; and in these instructive compositions, his pithy aphorisms appeared “like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

Several years before his death, he was afflicted with the gravel; but in the beginning of April, 1790, he was seized with a feverish indisposition, without any particular symptoms attending it, till the third and
fourth

fourth day, when he complained of a pain in his left breast; which increased, till it became extremely acute, attended with a cough and laborious breathing. In this way he continued till the 17th, when, with resignation to the divine will, he took his leave of this transient state of existence, aged 85.

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The following is an epitaph written by himself, long before his death :

The BODY
of

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, printer,

Like the cover of an old book,

Its contents worn out,

And stripped of its lettering and gilding,

Lies here, food for the worms ;

Yet the work shall not be lost,

For it shall (as he believed) appear once more,

In a new

And most beautiful edition,

corrected and revised

By the Author.

The E N D.

